

We should extend this program. We should address the Export-Import Bank's reauthorization. That is why, as we look at the Landrieu-Reed-Levin substitute amendment, it includes these provisions. It includes reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank, and it includes the extension of the SBA 504 program. It also includes a number of other provisions that address some of the concerns that have been expressed by the House-passed capital formation bill.

Senators LANDRIEU, REED, and LEVIN were on the floor earlier and very eloquently elaborated on those changes. I urge my colleagues to support that substitute amendment to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank and to extend SBA's 504 Loan Program.

I ask unanimous consent that I be added as a cosponsor to that Landrieu-Reed-Levin amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SCHOOL GUN VIOLENCE PROTECTION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, as news reports focus on yet another horrific shooting in an American school, we must again confront the simple and sad truth: tragedies like this are often preventable. On February 27, 17-year-old T.J. Lane opened fire in his high school cafeteria in Chardon, OH, killing three of his classmates and wounding two other students.

This is a narrative we have heard over and over again. Lane is believed to have taken the gun from his grandfather's barn. Similar to what happened 5 days earlier in Port Orchard, WA, when a 9-year-old boy accidentally shot his classmate with a .45-caliber handgun he took from his mother's house. Or in 2009, when a 15-year-old boy was institutionalized after stealing three guns and hundreds of rounds of ammunition from his father as part of a plan to shoot other students at Pottstown High School in Philadelphia. Sadly, these are not rare circumstances. A 2000 study by the U.S. Secret Service found that in more than

65 percent of school shootings, the attacker got the gun from his or her own home or from a relative.

The guardians of these children never intended for their firearms to be used for harm. But they left their loaded guns without any measures to prevent their children—or anyone else—from using them irresponsibly. According to reports by the Legal Community Against Violence, in a nation where approximately one-third of households with minors have a firearm, studies have shown that 55 percent of these households store one or more of their guns unlocked. Another study showed that 22 percent of the parents who claimed their children had never handled their firearms were contradicted by their children. When it comes to gun safety, a young person's curiosity and recklessness can be a dangerous thing.

It is imperative that gun owners across the country safely store their weapons out of the reach of young people. But despite these troubling statistics, there are no Federal laws that prevent adults from leaving firearms easily accessible to children and minors. Some State and local governments around the Nation have adopted child firearm access prevention measures, and these laws work. From 1990 to 1994, in the 12 States where child access prevention laws had been in effect for at least 1 year, unintentional firearm deaths fell by 23 percent among children under the age of 15. Laws that encourage parents to keep their firearms locked and unloaded, to store their ammunition in a locked location separate from their firearms, and to educate their children on proper gun use and safety, would help prevent shootings involving children and teenagers.

We must not wait for the next Chardon High School or the next Virginia Tech or the next Columbine. Commonsense gun safety legislation protects our schools, our universities, our religious institutions, and our homes from gun violence. But despite this evidence, legislation has been introduced in this Congress to dismantle the few Federal gun safety provisions that protect the American people. I urge our colleagues to support sensible gun safety measures that could prevent tragedies like the one unfolding in Ohio.

#### MOVING AHEAD FOR PROGRESS IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today I come to floor to express concerns about the transportation bill recently voted on by the Senate.

My State of Texas is the fastest-growing State in America, and our economic success has made us a national model and a magnet for talent. But rapid population and economic growth means an ever-increasing strain on our infrastructure.

This legislation takes several positive steps such as consolidating pro-

grams, improving project delivery, and expanding the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, also known as TIFIA, which has been successful in addressing various infrastructure needs in Texas and across our Nation.

Unfortunately, the bill is also deeply flawed. First, it is a 2-year proposal. Changing policy for such a short period of time does not give States like Texas the certainty they need to undertake meaningful long-term transportation projects.

In addition, the Senate bill uses 10 years' worth of revenue to pay for 2 years of spending. This is the type of budget gimmickry that makes Americans suspicious of Washington.

So we have legislation that is short-sighted and relies on accounting tricks. But the problems don't end there. The bill also moves us away from the user-pay principle. While this might work in the short term, closing a large funding gap with non-user tax revenues would ultimately destroy the Highway Trust Fund's protected budget status.

The legislation also does not address the Trust Fund's long-term insolvency problem. Instead, it spends down the balance in the Trust Fund leaving a substantial deficit starting in fiscal year 2014.

Finally, Texas receives significantly less from the Highway Trust Fund than it pays in. In 2009, Texas had the lowest Trust Fund return ratio in the country, according to a Heritage Foundation study. Congress simply must address the equity issue rather than rewarding a few States based on their previous share of highway funding.

I know there are those in my State who favor this legislation, and I share their commitment to finding solutions to our transportation challenges. But I believe the people of Texas and the people of America deserve a better approach. I hope that we can improve the bill during the conference process. Our challenges are difficult, but they are not insurmountable, and there is no reason we can't make 21st-century American infrastructure the very best in the world.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I would like to commend my colleagues for passing the highway bill yesterday, which included language from Mariah's Act, a bill I introduced last year. This bill reauthorizes the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA, and will improve safety programs on our roadways and safety standards in our vehicles.

Mariah's Act was named after Mariah West, a teen from Rogers, AR. A day before her high school graduation in 2010, Mariah was killed as a result of texting while driving. Mariah's mother, Merry, has since become an advocate against texting and driving and continues to promote safe driving habits across the country.

In part, Mariah's Act will prevent others from a similar tragedy by concentrating resources to prevent distracted driving. In 2010, more than 3,000